

# On the Status of *Phasis sardonyx* ab. *peringueyi* Aurivillius\* (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae), and the Selection of a Neallotype Female

By C. G. C. DICKSON

\**Phasis sardonyx* ab. *peringueyi* Aurivillius, 1925. Seitz's "Macrolepidoptera of the World," Vol. 13, p. 430.

Described originally as an aberration of *Phasis sardonyx* (Trimen)—owing presumably to insufficient material for comparative study—this butterfly has since been found to have such a wide distribution in its own general area and to differ in some respects so consistently from nominate *sardonyx* that one can only conclude that it represents at least a separate race. There is also a noticeable disparity in the flight periods of the two insects, that of nominate *sardonyx* being more spread out and continuing long after *peringueyi* would, from prolonged observations, appear to be right off the wing.

The status of *peringueyi* is being formally raised to subspecific rank and the female described for the first time, in this paper.

*Phasis sardonyx peringueyi* Aurivillius stat. nov.

Average size less than that of nominate *sardonyx* (with individual specimens of the males, anyway, of each insect, not infrequently of the same size); projection at the end of vein 1b of the hindwing less acute; underside of hindwing of an almost uniform coloration, as against the prominently streaked hindwing of nominate *sardonyx*.

*Male. Upperside.*

*Forewing.* Veining in the majority of specimens with more dark scaling than in nominate *sardonyx*; inner edge of distal band more crenulate in specimens in which the veining is well darkened. Inner-marginal area below vein 1 always more or less dusted with dark scaling, and to such an extent in some specimens as to obscure practically all the tawny-orange background in area 1.

*Hindwing.* The veining, as a rule, noticeably dark-scaled.

*Underside.*

*Forewing.* The postmedian spots often reduced to four spots (sometimes virtually three) and with their black rings obliterating or reducing the size of the silvery-white centres. (A fifth spot of the series below costa, in area 7, very much reduced in size, if present; and generally without any light centre.)

*Hindwing.* Wing-surface (like apical and distal-marginal areas of forewing), in fresh specimens, usually of a beautiful purplish-lake colour (in some, of a less rich tone) and devoid of the silvery-white lines (two short, below costa, and one long, postmedian) which are so characteristic of nominate *sardonyx*. In some specimens the darker bordering of the postmedian line may be indicated to some extent, while the lighter, rather triangular patch adjoining the inner margin towards the apex is always at least partially apparent.

Length of forewing (of specimens under examination): 15.75-19 mm.

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*Description of the neallotype female.*

*Upperside.*

Dark markings well developed but these, as well as the partly dark veining, less heavily so than in some paratypes.

*Forewing.* Postmedian black band continues broadly down to a large black patch in lower angle of wing—the band thus not broken or partially broken, or reduced in width, at its lower end as is often if not always the case in nominate *sardonyx*. Inner edge of distal band fairly crenulate—in some paratypes, hardly so. Area below vein 1 dusted with black scaling as in the male of *peringueyi*.

*Hindwing.* Postmedian band, with very jagged edges, continues broadly (though tapering somewhat) down to vein 2 and then narrows abruptly and ends as a small patch of diffuse dark scaling—in contrast to the band in nominate *sardonyx* which is normally very narrow below vein 4, or may be fragmentary or even absent below this vein. The slight projections at ends of veins 2-4 (in addition to the main projection at the end of vein 1b) less apparent than in nominate *sardonyx*.

*Underside.*

Differs from nominate female, as regards all wings, in same respects as does the male of *peringueyi* (as indicated above) from that of nominate *sardonyx*.

Length of forewing: 21 mm., in neallotype; 20.5-21.5 mm., in paratypes.

In both sexes of *peringueyi* the underside of the thorax and the abdomen as a whole are of a more purplish-lake coloration than in nominate *sardonyx*, this also applying to the antennae and palpi, at least above, the frontal scales and hairs and the legs, mainly above.

♀ Neallotype, Western Cape Province: Het Kruis, Piquetberg Division, 24.viii.1969 (C.G.C.D.); British Museum Reg. No. Rh. 17142.

Paratypes presented to British Museum (N.H.), data as neallotype, 2 ♀♀.

Paratype in Naturhistoriska Riks-Museum, Stockholm, data as neallotype, 1 ♀.

Paratype in Coll. Transvaal Museum, data as neallotype, 1 ♀.

Paratypes in Coll. Mrs. J. Sipser, data as neallotype, 4 ♀♀.

Paratype in Coll. W. H. Henning, data as neallotype, 1 ♀.

Paratype in Coll. V. Pringle, data as neallotype, 1 ♀.

The male type of *peringueyi* is in a rather rubbed condition and has clearly suffered from fading due to its age, but all the characters are clearly apparent. The dark markings of the upperside are moderately well developed, and those of the forewing underside are quite characteristic of this race. The veining of the upperside is not noticeably dark-scaled in this specimen. Length of forewing: 19.5 mm. The locality label is inscribed "Clanwilliam Leipoldt 1898," another label "Phasis sardonyx var. or new sp." and a third label "var. *Peringueyi* Auriv." A red label bears the numbers 307 and 69, with the second below the first. The collector of this specimen can be assumed to have been the late Dr. C. L. Leipoldt.

The male specimen which is figured is particularly darkly marked on the upperside, but it is not unusual for specimens to have the black markings of the upperside as a whole, though not necessarily the marginal bands, more heavily developed than those of nominate *sardonyx*.